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AUTHOR Perez, Blanca
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ABSTRACT

The nineteen lessons in this unit, designed to foster the practice and use of the basic skills of group discussion, were prepared for use by high school juniors and seniors who have had practice in effective speaking by preparing and delivering short talks. Each lesson outlines the objectives, content, procedure, reading assignment, and materials to be used for that lesson. Additional, pertinent materials are included for many of the lessons. (JM)

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Unit on Practicing and Using The Basic Skills of Discussion

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Blanca Perez
200 West 108th St. #3A
New York, NY 10025

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CS 501240

Unit on practicing and using the basic skill of discussion

GROUP: High school juniors or seniors who had practice in effective speaking by preparing and delivering short talks.

Objectives:

Each student will demonstrate that he can use the basic skills of group discussions by:

1. Maintaining an orderly behavior at least three out of every five times he speaks.
2. Verbally urging others to contribute at least three times during discussion.
3. Taking the responsibility to contribute by speaking at least five times during the discussion.
4. Responding to the contribution of the other group members by telling them in what way he agrees or disagrees with them at least three times during the discussion.
5. Listening to other speakers and summarizing differences in opinions at least three times during discussion.
6. Listening to other speakers and stating to what extent he agrees with the speaker at least three times during the discussion.
7. Listening to a challenger by asking questions and restating to check understanding at least twice during the discussion.
8. Using at least two of the five types of responses to elicit contribution rather than argument from the others:
   a. raising questions
   b. being supportive
   c. clarifying
   d. reflecting what the speaker feels or says.
   e. Giving examples from one's own experience.
9. Assuming at least two of the roles necessary in a discussion.
10. Compromising at least once in order to further the group's goal
11. Stopping to think ideas through when challenged in order to help the group arrive at consensus at least once.

Sources and Materials:

Textbook--Allen, Parish, Mortensen, Communication: Interacting Through Speech

The Michigan Speech Association Curriculum Guide Series, Discussion in the Secondary School

Gene Stanford and Barbara Dodds Stanford, Learning Discussion Skills through games

Lesson One

Objectives:

1. The student will introduce himself to the class by giving some information about himself that will help others know him better.
2. The student will be able to introduce his other classmates when asked by stating their names and giving a detail about each one.
3. The student will express how he feels by completing in class a worksheet of fill-in questions.

Content:
Getting acquainted with each other.

Procedure:

1. Arrange chairs in circle with teacher sitting with students.

2. Each group member including teacher goes to blackboard, writes his name, and tells the group his name and describes himself by including hobbies, after school activities, interests, etc.

3. Ask everyone to complete the form of fill-in questions by filling it as best he could according to the way he or she feels.

Reading Assignment:
Read pp. 107-112 in text.

Material:
Fill-in form

DEVELOPING DISCUSSION SKILLS

Complete the following statements in writing as best you can:

1. When I enter a new group, I feel:

2. When people first meet me, they:

3. When someone does all the talkirg, I:

4. I feel most productive when the teacher in the class:

5. In a group, I am most afraid of:

6. I am hurt most easily when:

7. I feel loneliest in a group when:

8. I trust those who:

9. I feel closest to others when:

10. I feel loved most when:

11. My greatest strength is:

12. I am:

Lesson Two

Objectives:

1. The student will read in class his statements on the worksheet expressing his feelings about being in a group.
2. The student will take part in the sharing of his impressions of the others.
3. Having read the homework assignment, the student will take part in a discussion on the reading.

Content:

1. Getting used to communicating feelings in a group.
2. Expressing one's own feelings about being a member of a group.

Procedure:

1. Go around the circle. Ask each student to read his first statement.
2. Discuss:
   a. new perceptions of people--each other.
   b. the similarities and differences between their answers.
      Why are there similarities and differences?
   Repeat for each statement on the worksheet.

3. Discuss reading assignment:
   a. According to the reading, how do our expectations influence our first encounters?
      Do you find this to be true with this class' initial meeting?
   b. How are first impressions based?
      True or false--according to your own experiences?

Reading Assignment:

pp. 127-135 in text.

Material:

Worksheet
textbook

Lesson Three

Objectives:

1. The student will contribute in class to the construction of a definition of "discussion".
2. The student will give when asked the definition which the class as a whole has agreed upon.
3. Each student will list at least three purposes of a group discussion at the end of the lesson.

Content:

1. Deriving a definition of "discussion" useful for class purposes.
2. Recognizing the purposes of a discussion.

Procedure:

1. Elicit that spoken language is the most widespread form of communication and that discussions are the most common form of conversation.

2. Randomly ask each student for a characteristic of discussion. Write on board.

3. Construct from this information a definition for discussion.

4. Spot check to make sure each student knows the agreed upon definition.

5. Discuss purposes of discussion and reading assignment:
   a. What are some of the purposes of forming groups according to the reading?
   b. What other purposes are there for discussions? Make list on black board.

6. Randomly ask students to give at least 3 purposes of discussion discussed in class that day.

Assignment:

Read pp. 140-145 in textbook.
Decide which pattern of group discussion you prefer. Give reasons for your choice.

Material:

Textbook pp. 127-35.

Lesson Four

Objectives:

1. The student will take part in performing the assigned task in his assigned group.
2. After performing the task, each group will give 3 reasons why organizing for action is essential in a group activity.

Content:

Organizing for action.

Procedure:

1. Review definition of "discussion" and the purposes of discussion groups.

2. Discussion on homework assignment.
   Analysis of each model and discussion.
   Which model do you prefer? Why?

3. Break class into three groups, each group seated in a circle.

4. Ask each group:
   Calculate the average height in feet and inches of the members of your group. If a member does not know his exact height, he may give an estimate. The group must agree on the answer and appoint someone to submit it to the teacher.

5. After all the answers have been submitted by the groups, discuss the process used for solving the problem:
   a. What slowed the group down?
   b. What problems did it have in organizing?
   c. Did anyone take over leadership?
   d. Is this good or bad?
   e. Did you need a leader?
   f. What responsibility did each member have?
   g. How could you solve the problem faster next time?
   h. Why was organization important in completing the task?

6. Ask each group to collectively arrive at 3 reasons why organizing for action is important in solving a problem.

7. Write the reasons on board and have entire class collectively decide on the most important reasons.

8. Ask each group which of the models in the textbook did they find their groups following? Was it successful?

Reading Assignment:

Read pp. 156-160 to find out why participation is important in a discussion.

Material:

Textbook pp. 140-145

Lesson Five

Objectives:

1. Having read the assigned pages for homework, the student will verbalize his opinion on the material.
2. The student will participate in solving the unsolved mystery by contributing and urging the others to contribute their information.
3. After completing the activity, the group members will:
   a. verbalize the difficulty of solving problems and the need for considering the information every group member can contribute in accomplishing a task or solving a problem.
   b. give reasons why organization is of importance in solving a problem when asked to do so.

Content:

Urging each other to contribute/taking into account the contribution of the group member.

Procedure:

1. Ask students--according to the textbook, what are some of the risks of participating in a discussion group?
   What are the rewards?
   Do you agree with these?
   Can you add any other risks? Rewards?
   How important do you feel is participation in a discussion?

2. Break class into groups. Ask them to sit in a circle. Explain that the following activity will help them in participating and accepting each other's contributions. Explain to class that each one of them will receive 3 clues that will help them discover who robbed the First National Bank of $1,000,000. By putting all the facts together, they will be able to solve the mystery. Anytime they think they know the answer and they agree as a group, they may give their answer.
   Important Note: The group members may not pass their clues around or show them to anyone. All sharing of clues and ideas must be done <u>verbally</u>.

3. Follow-up:
   a. Did you need a leader for your group?
   b. How was time lost in getting organized?
   c. What problems arose because some people did not present their clues.
   d. Waht should they have done?
   e. Was any attempt made to urge all persons to present their clues?
   f. What happened when someone forgot a clue?
   g. Were you all included in solving the problem?
   h. Was there one person who monopolized the discussion?
   i. How could you have solved the mystery more quickly?
   J. Give two reasons why organization was important in solving this mystery.

Material:

Textbook pp. 156-160
Mystery story clues

ROBBERY MYSTERY

The robbery was discovered at 8:00 AM on Friday, November 14. The bank had closed at 5:00 PM the previous day.

Miss Margaret Ellington, a teller at the bank, discovered the robbery.

The vault of the bank has been blasted open by dynamite.

The president of the bank, Mr. Albert Greenbags, left before the robbery was discovered. He was arrested by authorities at the Mexico City airport at noon on Friday, November 14th.

The president of the bank had been having trouble with his wife, who spent all of his money. He had frequently talked of leaving her.

The front door of the bank had been opened by the janitor and the president of the bank.

Miss Ellington often borrowed the president's key to open the bank early when she had an extra amount of work to do.

A strange, hippie-type person had been hanging around the bank on Thursday, November 13th, watching employees and customers.

A substantial amount of dynamite had been stolen from the Acme Construction Corporation on Wednesday, November 12th.

An Acme employee, Howard Ellington, said that a hippie had been hanging around the construction company on Wednesday afternoon.

The hippie-type character, whose name was Dirsey Flowers and who had recently dropped out of Southwest State Teachers College, was found by police in East Birdwatch, about 10miles from Minnetonka.

Dirsey Flowers was carrying $500 when police apprehended him and had thrown a package into the river as the police approached.

Anastasia Wallflower of East Birdwatch, Wisconsin, said that she had bought $500 worth of genuine Indian love beads from Dirsey Flowers for resale in her boutique in downtown East Birdwatch.

Anastasia said that Dirsey had spent the night of November 13th at the home of her parents and left after a pleasant breakfast on the morning of the 14th.

When police tried to locate the janitor of the bank, Elwood Smith, he had apparently disappeared.

Miss Ellington stated that her brother Howard, when strolling to Taylor's Diner for coffee about 11:00 PM on Thursday, November 13th, had seen Mr. Smith running from the bank.

Mr. Smith was found by the FBI ub Dogwalk, Georgia, on November 14th. He had arrived there via Southern Airlines Flight 414 at 5:00 PM on the 13th.

The airline clerk confirmed the time of Smith's arrival.

Mr. Greenbags was the only person who had a key to the vault.

There were no planes out of Dogwalk Between 4:00 PM and 7:00 AM.

In addition to keeping payroll records, Mr. Ellington was in charge of the dynamite supplies of the Acme Construction Company.

Mr. Greenbag's half-brother, Arthur Nodough, had always been jealous of his brother.

Nodough always got drunk on Friday nights.

Arthur Nodough appeared in Chicago on Monday, November 10th, waving a lot of money.

Arthur wanted to marry Camelia Smith.

Miss Ellington said that Smith had often flirted with her.

Mr. Smith's father, a gold prospector in Alaska, had died in September.

Mr. Greenbags waited in the terminal at O'Hare Field in Chicago for 16 hours because of engine trouble on the plane he was to take to Mexico City.

ANSWER: The Ellingtons collaborated to rob the bank, Miss Ellington supplying the front door key (borrowed from Mr. Greenbags) and Howard supplying dynamite. Greenbags had already left for Brazil when the robbery took place. Mr. Smith was in Dogwalk on the night of the robbery. Dirsey Flowers was at the home of Anastasia's parents. The Ellingtons were lying when they tried to implicate Smith. There was no evidence that Arthur Nodough was connected with the robbery in any way.

Lesson Six

Objectives:

1. The student will verbally urge the others to participate in the discussion.
2. The student will contribute at least once during a 15 minute discussion on the assigned topic in his group.
3. The student will use the skills of organization in his group.

Content:

Taking responsibility to contribute

Procedure:

1. Review: Why is it important to consider what each group member has to say? Why must a group be organized?

2. Elicit that initiative as well as urging each other to contribute is important.

3. Give each group, seated in a circle, the question "In what ways could our school be improved?" for discussion.

4. Rules:
   a. Every member must contribute at least once in the 15 minutes.
   b. Members must contribute in random order, not in the order in which they are seated aroung the circle. Discussions will be tape-recorded.

5. Follow-up:
   Ask students in each group and discuss:
   a. How did the group decide in what order students were going to speak?
   b. Who kept order?
   c. What means were used to encourage the more reluctant members to contribute?
   d. After listening to the tape, how did each member feel about his contribution?

6. Use tape recordings for evaluation of each student's contribution- how often did he?

Material:

Three tape recorders.

Lesson Seven

Objectives:

1. In his group, the student will respond to the previous speaker's statement by looking directly at the previous specaker and telling him in what way he agrees or disagrees with his opinion.
2. After the activity, the student will contribute to his group one reason why group members failed to respond to other's statements.

Content:

Responding to other contributions.

Procedure:

1. Review theskills covered thus far:
   a. Importance of organization
   b. Importance of urging everygroup member to contribute.
   c. Importance of taking the responsibility to contribute.

2. Elicit that in good discussions, participants must combine ideas and that it is necessary to build on the ideas of others rather than ignoring them.

3. Activity:
   Break into groups.
   Announce the question to be discussed-"How is alcoholism a problem for teenagers today?"
   One student will state his opinion. When he has finished a group member will respond to speaker one. He must look at him directly and tell him in what ways he agrees or disagrees. He must not simply tell the group his own opinion. The other members will observe and evaluate. Continue until every group member has responded.

4. Follow-up:

   Did you notice anytimes when a member ignored the previous contribution and presented a new idea?
   What reasons does each group have for the cause of this?
   List on board all the compiled reasons.

Lesson Eight

Objectives:

1. The student when asked will summarize the differences in the opinions expressed by other group members on a given topic.
2. The student will judge whether the summary given by other group members is accurate.

Content:

Listening for differences in opinions.

Procedure:

1. Review: importance of responding to each other's opinions and contributions.

2. Announce topic for discussion: "Are interracial marriages adviseable?"
   Two group members will present the two sides of the question. When they are finished, call on three students to summarize the differences between the two positions. The two students presenting the arguments judge the most accurate summary. Repeat with new topic until all group members have been called on to summarize.

   Topic suggestions.
   a. Should girls share the cost of dates?
   b. Should women remain in the home or should they have the choice to work outside the home?
   c. Should marijuana be legalized?

3. After each round of judging, ask students in what ways their summaries could have been more accurate. Ask them to try to identify the causes for lack of accuracy.

4. Ask how summarizing was helpful to them..

Lesson Nine

Objective:

The student when requested to will express verbally to what extent he agrees with a previously stated opinion without stating to what extent he disagrees with the stated opinion.

Content:

Listening for agreements in opinions.

Procedure:

1. Review: How does summarizing differences of opinion leads to better understanding?

2. Elicit that in discussions very often participants also agree with each other.

3. Announce topic for discussion for groups: "Is mercy killing justifiable?
   Appoint one student to state his opinion on the question. Then call on second student to respond to that opinion.
   Rules:
   a. Summarize the position of the speaker to demonstrate understanding.
   b. Then state to what extent he agrees with it. Point out all areas of agreement but do not state any disagreement or arguments.
   Go around until each group member has been both speaker and respondent.

4. Discuss the difficulties students had in following the instructions:
   a. Why is it hard to state areas of agreement?
   b. Why is it helpful to establish areas of agreement before disagreeing?

Lesson Ten

Objectives:

1. The student when appointed will state in a single, clear sentence what his position on a given topic is.
2. The student when challenging the previous speaker's position will state clearly his position.
3. The student will demonstrate that he is listening to the challenger by asking questions and restating to check understanding, to the challenger's satisfaction, before defending his own position.
4. In a five minute quiz, the student will state at least two of the ways in which he can demonstrate that he has been listening carefully to the speaker:
   a. summarizing differences.
   b. stating to what extent he agrees and disagrees
   c. restating previous speaker's opinion
   d. asking questions

Content:

Listening to each other.

Procedure:

1. Review the ways in which listening to each other and repeating what a speaker has said, whether a disagreement or agreement, helps a discussion group come to a better understanding.

2. Announce that the groups will again be taking part in a discussion to practice the skills of listening.
   Topic: Dear Abby letter.

3a. Appoint one member in each group to state in one clear sentence how he feels about the situation.
   b. Ask other group members who disagree to raise their hands.
   c. Ask the speaker to choose the challenger with whom he wishes to discuss the issue. The challenger states his objections to speaker one's statement. Speaker one cannot interrupt him until he has finished. Then Speaker one must attempt to understand the challenger's position by asking questions and by restating to check understanding. The challenger must be satisfied with the restatement before the speaker can continue.
   d. Continue until the two participants and the other group members feel that the issue has been resolved or that they have understood each other's point of view to its maximum extent.
   e. Appoint another speaker until all group members have participated.

4. Discuss with entire class the advantages of clearly stating one's opinion and understanding each other's positions in a discussion.

5. Quiz: five minutes.
   State in what ways we can demonstrate that we have been carefully listening to a speaker.

Material: Dear Abby Letter

Dear Abby:

About three weeks ago I met a sailor at a dance. I am 16 and Jim is 19. We liked each other right away and he asked me if he could see me again. I asked my mother and she said I could not go out with a sailor. I told her I was going to a girl friend's house and I went with him anyway. When I told Jim I lied to go with him he was furious and made me promise I'd never do it again. He asked if he could meet my parents and show them he was respectable. When I asked them if they would please meet Jim they said no. Abby, he's the nicest boy I've ever known, but he refuses to see me without my parents' permission. And they refuse to meet him. What should I do?

Broken Hearted

Lesson Eleven

Objective:

The student will elicit contribution rather than provoke argument by using the following five types of responses in a discussion with another group member at least once:

a. Raising questions.
b. Being supportive
c. Clarifying
d. Reflecting what the speaker says or feels
e. Giving examples of one's own experience.

Content:

Encouraging contribution rather than argument.

Procedure:

1. Discuss:
   a. Why do discussions often result in "putting down" of each other's opinions?
   b. What can be done to discourage arguments and encourage constructive contributions?

2. List and discuss the five types of responses that will motivate discussion:
   a. raising questions
   b. being supportive
   c. Clarifying
   d. Reflecting what the speaker says or feels
   e. Giving examples of one's own experience

3. Break into groups.
   Appoint one student from each group to discuss the question: "On what basis do you choose friends?"
   Appoint another group member whose role it will be to listen to the speaker and encourage him to keep talking by using the five responses on board at least once. The remaining members of the group will evaluate the listener on a rating sheet for the number of times he or she uses the listed responses and how successful he is in drawing out the speaker.

4. Ask for a report from the observors.
   Ask the speaker how he felt about the listener's responses.

5. Continue until all students have been listeners.

Material:

Rating sheets.

Rating sheet: Check once for each time the listener uses each type of response

Lesson Twelve

Objectives:

1. The student will play a role assigned to him five minutes before he must assume it.
2. The student will identify the role played by each participant after the discussion has taken place.
3. After some discussion, the student when asked will state the roles necessary in the discussion process and their purposes.

Content:

Roles of group members

Procedure:

1. Ask students who thus far in their groups seems to have:
   a. assumed leadership most often
   b. initiated the discussions
   c. assumed a large part of the actual work
   Why did this occur?

2. Ask students what they feel is the role they have played most often and should they limit themselves to the one role.

3. Ask students what roles are important and necessary in a discussion and provide them with some information.
   List on board:
   a. Initiator
      -helps start discussion
      -organizes the group
      -introduces new ideas
      -raises new questions
   b. Clarifier
      -asks for additional information
      -requests definition of vague terms
      -raises questions about previous contributions
   c. Summarizer
      -brings group up to date on their progress
      -indicates where they stand on the issue
      -points out areas of agreement and disagreement
   d. Contributing group member
      -provides information
      -states opinion
      -reacts to the others.
   e. Evaluator
      -keep group informed on how well they are attaining their goals
      -points out weaknesses in
   f. Leader
      -is constantly aware of group's needs
      -establishes climate that promotes participation
      -encourages others to speak.
4. Break up into groups.
   Assign topic:"Does television influence our way of life?"
   Provide each participant with a piece of paper indicating his role:

Lesson Twelve cont.

a. initiator
b. clarifier
c. summarizer
d. contributing group member
e. evaluator
f. leader
g. observor (stands back and watches)

Instruct students not to tell anyone the role they have been assigned. They are to reveal it through their behavior during the discussion.

5. Follow-up:
   a. The group tries to identify the roles played by each member on a piece of paper.
   b. Ask one group member to tabulate how well each group member played his role according to the correct identification by the others.
   c. Ask for suggestions as to how the roles might have been played more effectively.
6. Discuss:
   -How the roles helped the group accomplish its goals
   -How it helped the organization of the group and participation of its members.
   Ask observors to share their impressions of how their group worked.
7. Spot-check how many students know the roles necessary in a discussion process and their purposes by asking as many students as time will permit.

Reading Assignment:

Read pp. 160-166 in textbook to review some of the skills we have been practicing and discussing.

Lesson Thirteen

Objectives:

1. The student will share information with the other group members to solve a given problem.
2. After solving the problem and after some discussion, the student will state in a one-page essay to be graded:
   a. why organization was important in this activity
   b. what roles different members played
   c. how contributions played an important and necessary role in the problem solving.
   d. how this exercise demonstrated that conclusions arrived at by a group is superior to what they could have accomplished alone.
   e. why compromising was sometimes necessary
   f. how he was forced to think his ideas through when challenged.

Content:

Arriving at a consensus

Procedure:

1. Discuss reading assignment by reviewing some important points relating to organization, contributions, listening, and playing various roles.

2. Announce that in the activity to be performed today, all of these skills will have to be implemented.

3. Distribute to each group member a copy of "Lost on the Moon." Read and discuss origin of the game (on sheet).

4. Break into groups--
   Give instructions to the groups:
   a. Read problem explained on the distributed sheets
   b. Your task is to solve the problem as a group
   c. Your answers must be agreed upon by every member of the group. So spend time talking over your ideas about each item and share any information you have that will help the group.
   d. When you have made a final decision, record your group answer on a fresh copy of the problem and compare it to the answers by NASA.

5. Following exercise:

   -What problems did you have with organization? How did you deal with them?
   -What roles did different members assume?
   -How did each other's contributions help?
   -What stumbling blocks did you encounter?
   -How did the group go about dealing with conflicts and disagreements?
   -Which members felt they had to give in? Why?
   -How could this problem have been solved easier?

6. Ask each student to write an essay including the following:
   a. What part organization played inthis game
   b. Different roles played by different members
   c. why contributions are important
   d. how a solution arrived at by group work is better than one arrived at alone.
   e. Why group members had to compromise at times
   f. how the challenging of others forced him to think through his ideas.

Material:

Copies of NASA game worksheet
Correct score sheet

This "Lost on the Moon" game, devised by Jay Hall, associate professor of management, University of Texas School of Business Administration, is based on actual work performed by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

You are in a space crew originally scheduled to rendevous with a mother ship on the lighted surface of the moon. Mechanical difficulties, however, have forced your ship to crashland at a spot some 200 miles from the rendevous point. The rough landing damaged much of the equipment aboard. Since survival depends on reaching the mother ship, the most critical items available must be chosen for the 200-mile trip. The fifteen items left intact after the landing are listed below. Your task is to rank them in terms of their importance to your crew in its attempt to reach the rendevous point. Place number 1 by the most important, number 2 by the second most important, and so on through the least important, number 15.

___Box of matches

___Food concentrates

___50 feet of nylon rope

___Parachute silk

___Portable heating unit

___Two .45 caliber pistols

___One case dehydrated milk

___Two 100-pound tanks of oxygen

___Stellar map of the moon's constellation

___Life raft containing CO_2 bottles.

___Magnetic compass

___5 gallons of water

___Signal flares

___First-aid kit containing injection needles

___Solar-powered FM receiver-transmitter.

Answer key for "Lost on the Moon:

15

4

6

8

13

11

12

1

3

9

14

2

10

7

5

Lesson Fourteen

Objectives:

The student will work in his group and select a topic for their discussion that meets the three criteria for selecting a topic area:

a. Is topic keeping with the purpose of the group--problem solving or understanding?
b. Is topic related to interests, abilities, and resourses of the group?
c. Is topic relevant and significant to the group?

Content:

Selecting the topic

Prócedure:

1. Discussion of and on board: 3 criteria for selecting topic each group should keep in mind--
   a. Is topic keeping with the purpose of the group--problem-solving or understanding.
   b. Is topic related to interests, abilities, and resources of the group?
   c. Is topic relevant and significant to the group?

2. Break class into 3 groups.
3. Each group will conduct a group brain storming session to generate 4 general topic areas.
   Suggestions: student life, health, ecology, education, sex.
4. Each will write the topic he or she prefers most to least in order of preference. One student will tabulate and announce results.

5. Ask groups to evaluate the topic according to the criteria discussed earlier and make their decision.

Lesson Fifteen

Objective:

The student will contribute in his group to the phrasing of a discussion question that meets the five criteria for stating a discussion topic as a question:

a. Is wording clear, compelling, concise?
b. Does question indicate a specific area to be covered in discussion?
c. Is the question phrased objectively?
d. Is the question suited for group discussion?
e. Does the question encourage a variety or responses, solutions, or alternatives?

Content:

Phrasing topic as a question

Procedure:

1. Pass out sheets with the criteria necessary for topic selection and discussion topic phrasing.

2. Discuss and review the 3 criteria for selecting topic area (on sheet).
3. Discuss the 5 criteria for phrasing a discussion question (on sheet).
4. Gather into groups and work on phrasing of discussion questions to meet criteria as indicated on sheet.

5. Collect the finished discussion questions.

Material:

Information sheet on criteria

Name_____

Three necessary elements to consider when selecting a topic:

1. Is topic keeping with the purpose of the group--problem-solving or understanding?
2. Is topic related to interests, abilities, and resources of the group?
3. Is topic relevant and significant to the group?

Five necessary elements to consider when phrasing a topic as a question:

1. Is wording clear, compelling, concise?
2. Does question indicate a specific area to be covered in discussion?
3. Is the question phrased objectively?
4. Is the question suited for group discussion?
5. Does the question encourage a variety of responses, solutions, or alternatives?

Lesson Sixteen

Objective:

The student will take part in a review of the skills practiced in the unit to prepare him for his group discussion.

Content:
Review

Procedure:

1. Ask students for the definition of "discussion"--discuss it somewhat.
2. Discuss importance of organizing for action.
3. Discuss the necessity of contribution and the means to encourage contribution in a discussion.
4. Ask why careful listening is essential-what we listen for.
5. Discuss why must we differentiate between contributing and arguing in a discussion process. What are the five types of responses to elicit contribution.
6. Ask what roles are necessary for participants to assume and why.
7. Emphasize and ask why arriving at a consensus is valuable and what one must do to help group members arrive at a solution.
8. Review criteria for selecting topic
9. Review criteria for phrasing topic as a question.
10. Announce that each group will participate in their discussion during one class period. Each group will have one period. While one group is discussing, the remainder of the class and teacher will be evaluating that group.

Lessons Seventeen, Eighteen and Nineteen

Objectives:

Each student will demonstrate that he can use the basic skills of group discussions by:

1. Maintaining an orderly behavior at least three out of every five times he speaks.
2. Verbally urging others to contribute at least three times during discussion.
3. Taking the responsibility to contribute by speaking at least five times during the discussion.
4. Responding to the contribution of the other group members by telling them in what way he agrees or disagrees with them at least three times during the discussion.
5. Listening to other speakers and summarizing differences in opinions at least three times during discussion.
6. Listening to other speakers and stating to what extent he agrees with the speaker at least three times during discussion.
7. Listening to a challenger by asking questions and restating to check understanding at least twice during the discussion.
8. Using at least two of the five types of responses to elicit contribution rather than argument from the others:
   a. raising questions
   b. being supportive
   c. clarifying
   d. reflecting what the speaker says or feels
   e. Giving examples from one's own experiences.
9. Assuming at least two of the roles necessary in a discussion
10. Compromising at least once in order to further the group's goal.
11. Stopping to think ideas through when challenged in order to help the group arrive at consensus at least once.

Content:

discussion groups

Procedure:

1. Ask the group that will be discussing to set themselves up.

2. Evaluation--
   Pass out rating sheets to other students.
   Appoint certain class members to observe certain group members and to rate them.

Materials:

Rating sheets
Teacher's rating scale

USING BASIC DISCUSSION SKILLS
Final discussion

Name of speaker _____
Name of observor _____
Topic _____

Rating Sheet

SKILL	Check each time used	TOTAL
1. Use of organization skill--speaking in an orderly manner		
2. Verbally urging others to contribute during discussion		
3. Taking responsibility to contribute		
4. Responding to contributions of other group members by telling them in what way he agrees or disagrees.		
5. Listening to other speakers & summarizing differences in opinion.		
6. Listening to other speakers and stating to what extent he agrees with the speaker		
7. Listening to a challenger by asking questions and restating to check understanding.		
8. Use of 5 types responses to elicit contributions rather than arguments.		
a. raising questions		
b. being supportive		
c. clarifying		
d. reflecting what speaker says or feels		
e. Giving examples from one's own experience.		
9. Assuming the roles necessary in a discussion:		
a. Initiator		
b. Clarifier		
c. Summarizer		
d. Cantributing group member		
e. evaluator		
f. leader		
10. Compromised in order to further the group's goals.		
11. Stopped to think when challenged		

RATING SHEET SCALE

Skill #	Grades
1.	3 - C 4 - B 5 - A
2.	3 - C 4-7 - B 8 & over - A
3.	5 - C 6-9 - B 10 & over - A
4.	3 - C 4-7 - B 8 & over - A
5.	3 - C 4-6 - B 7 & over - A
6.	3- C 4-6 - B 7 & over - A
7.	2 - A 3-5 - B 6 & over - A
8.	2 - C 3 - B 5 - A
9.	2 - C 3-4 - B 5-6 - A
10.	1 - C 2 - B 3 - A
11.	1 - C 2 - B 3 - A